MARKETING BEFORE 1825

Until the British encouraged sundry traders from the plains to establish a weekly bazaar in Ootacamund around the year 1825,[8] there was no market-place on the plateau itself, and coinage did not circulate much among Badagas. Nevertheless they did participate slightly in the market economy of the plains early in the last century. Depending on the position of their villages some went down the eastern slopes to the market of Ka:ramuḍu (in Tamil, Ka:ramaḍai), others chose a route down the northern slopes to the Mysore town of Guṇḍuḷupe:te and those in Kundena:ḍu went southward (as in Finicio's day) to Sundepatti, a small market in the westernmost corner of the Coimbatore Plain.[9] Apart from visiting Ka:ramuḍu (which they called Koṅgu, meaning 'plains') they never had any occasion to travel extensively on the Coimbatore Plain. Guṇḍuḷupe:te used simply to be called Pet: this meant 'a place where people gather together', hence a market; or according to some, 'a place where cattle gather'. For a long time it was a major cattle market in southern Mysore.

Early each March the Kanarese Chettis and other people of Ka:ramuḍu held a festival to honour the god Raṅgana:tan, after which there was a large cattle fair and general market.[10] A delegation of Badaga men from villages in the eastern part of the Nilgiris attended that festival every year.[11] They would first help drag the chariot of the deity and then would barter goods for coinage and whatever else they needed. There seems to have been no fixed date for the annual visit of more westerly villagers to Guṇḍuḷupe:te, but it coincided roughly with the Ka:ramuḍu expedition. In both cases the Badagas obtained provisions for their main harvest festival, the Great Festival,[12] which falls in March or April, and salt for the ceremonial feeding of their cattle in March. In Guṇḍuḷupe:te Lingayats could also buy personal *liṅgas* at the monastery. In view of the long walk from these markets and the 1500 m. ascent, it is not surprising that the items bought were small and fairly valuable.

All three trading expeditions were organized on the same principle. Permission to go was first obtained from the village headmen, then preliminary arrangements were made as to who would go and the time of their departure. The Badaga headmen would then send a message to neighbouring Kota headmen, thus giving Kotas an opportunity to join the party, for the Kotas did not

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

174 435 458 Because of their wetter climate the Badagas have always been able to subsist while famine ravaged the South Indian plains (Grigg, 1880, 34). Even so, Badagas were undoubtedly affected by the occasional lowland famines and by fluctuations in the grain prices, since they sold their grain surplus in the nearby lowland markets. We need hardly point out that they would have made unusually good profits from sales in the famine years, but they might also have been taxed more heavily in those years.

MARKETING AFTER 1825

174 366 (177) Around the year 1825 the British settlers, through their officials in Ootacamund, began to encourage traders from the plains to develop a market in that town and provided government-owned land for the purpose (Price, 1908, 233). By the end of 1827,

> ...advances had been made to [immigrant] natives to open bazaars...in the place so that 'the market is now well and regularly supplied with every essential article'...a public establishment of palanquin-bearers was kept up; and...villages were beginning to spring up at the foot of the passes (Hayavadana Rao, 1908, 115; compare Grigg, 1880, 288).

174 439 The traders in those early days were Chettis from Me:ṭṭupa:ḷaya, Ka:ramuḍu and other nearby lowland villages.[19] The market in Ootacamund was held only on Monday and Tuesday of each week; every Thursday the same traders held a market in Sirumuge, and on Friday were in Ka:ramuḍu. In these places they would collect the produce from the surrounding Chetti-controlled villages, then on Friday night they would start out by bullock-cart up the long Coonoor pass to the plateau. Their merchandise included rice, salt, crude sugar, coconut and other foodstuffs.[20] As the climb was entirely uphill the bullocks rested all day Saturday and Sunday on the slopes and travelled throughout the nights. Later on in the century wealthy Chettis built some free rest-houses by the roadside for these journeys. The carts regularly reached Ootacamund on Sunday evening after a forty-eight hour haul. After two days of trading the Chettis left with their loaded carts around four each Tuesday afternoon. By Friday morning they were back in Ka:ramuḍu to repeat the weekly cycle and to barter

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

their Nilgiri acquisitions for further produce to take up to the hills.

According to modern Badaga informants their forebears did not use cash at the Ootacamund market during the first two decades of its existence. They exchanged the products of their own lands for the foodstuffs brought up by Chettis. In this way the Nilgiri Plateau was exporting a variety of goods to Ka:ramuḍu and its environs, especially clarified butter, onions, honey, coriander, opium and millet hay.

The initial period of barter in the bazaar passed as the town acquired a few regular shops. Later in the nineteenth century coinage came into use in the market, now open every day, and a government superintendent fixed the day's prices (Ouchterlony, 1848, 72; Price, 1908, 187). One could even borrow money there at 2 or 3% per month interest (depending on the security). Monday and Tuesday in Ootacamund, Thursday in Sirumuge, Friday in Ka:ramuḍu and Saturday in Me:ṯṯupa:ḷaya are however still called 'shandy days',[21] and it is still customary for Badagas to visit the Nilgiri towns on Monday, their weekly holiday, and to send truckloads of farm produce to Me:ṯṯupa:ḷaya or to Ka:ramuḍu each Friday. The transition to exclusive use of coinage in the market took a very long time, for as recently as 1924 Gaymard was able to remark that when they made their weekly trips to town some Badagas did not carry a purse but instead a basket or sackful of grain which they would exchange there for salt, pimentos, utensils and cloth (Gaymard, 1924, 2–3).

ITINERANT TRADERS ON THE PLATEAU

Both before and after these town bazaars were established the Badagas maintained another kind of link with the lowland economy. Chettis from villages lying directly east of the Nilgiris used to (and still do) come up onto the plateau once a month on foot for petty trading. Badagas call them Regional Chettis *(na:ḍu cetti)*, in reference perhaps to the restricted range of each man's trading itinerary. Although living in a Tamil-speaking area their native tongue is Kannada. Their settlements in and near the towns of Sirumuge, Me:ṯṯupa:ḷaya and Ka:ramuḍu are concerned with petty trade, weaving and agriculture. The Chetti and his family weave cloth in their home for the Badagas; and until the advent of the Ootacamund bazaar they were the regular source for cloth

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AN50 Badaga AN50

lxv; De La Tour, 1822, 261; Baber, 1830, 315; Harkness, 1832, 136-137; Birch, 1838, 103; 'Stocqueler,' 1845, 579; Price, 1908, 8; Sarada Raju, 1941, 107-108. On the partition of the district, see Grigg, 1880, 290-291, 303, and Hayavadana Rao, 1908, 117. See also Hockings, 1973.

7. Botanical identifications for the species referred to in this study, here arranged alphabetically, are as follows: almonds *(Terminalia catappa)*, barley *(Hordeum hexastichon)*, betel or areca nut *(Areca catechu)*, black dammer or resin (from *Canarium strictum*), black gram *(Phaseolus mungo)*, chick pea or Bengal gram *(Cicer arietinum)*, coconut *(Cocos nucifera)*, coffee *(Coffea arabica)*, common millet *(Panicum miliaceum)*, coriander *(Coriandrum sativum)*, country bean *(Dolichos lablab)* fenugreek *(Trigonella foenum-graecum)*, field peas *(Pisum arvense)*, finger millet *(Eleusine coracana)*, flax *(Linum myzorense)*, garlic *(Allium sativum)*, gentian *(Gentiana pedicellata)*, gourd *(Lagenaria vulgaris)*, great millet *(Andropogon sorghum)*, Italian millet *(Setoria italica)*, Italian rye *(Lolium italicum)*, lime *(Citrus aurantifolia)*, mustard *(Brassica juncea)*, oats *(Avena sativa)*, onion *(Allium cepa)*, panic-seed *(Setaria pallidifusca)*, pepper *(Piper schmidtii)*, poppy *(Papaver somniferum)*, potato *(Solanum tuberosum)*, prince's feather *(Amarantus paniculatus)*, pumpkin *(Cucurbita pepo)*, rattan cane *(Calamus spp.)*, rose-mallow *(Hibiscus esculentus)*, sandalwood *(Santalum album)*, slender millet *(Panicum miliare)*, tea *(Camellia sinensis)*, tobacco *(Nicotiana tabacum)*, turmeric *(Curcuma longa)*, and wheat *(Triticum dicoccum)*.

8. Hayavadana Rao, 1908, 115. This area is now the playing field between the Lawley Institute and the Botanical Gardens.

9. Baikie, 1857, 25. In the mid-nineteenth century the Sundepatti and Maana:ru Passes provided a safe short-cut for smugglers between Coimbatore and Malabar; Ouchterlony, 1848, 75; Grigg, 1880, 9, 291.

10. Nicholson, 1898, 352. Note that the deity is a Vaishnavite one; its chariot-dragging festival is still held. See above, p. 145.

11. After crossing the Bhavani River in a rattan coracle covered with skins; Mackworth, 1823, 118-119; Grigg, 1880, 295. Once a market was opened in Ootacamund Ka:ramudu ceased to have much importance for Badagas; Francis, 1908, 340.

12. *dodda habba*; on the salt ceremony, see Hockings, 1968c, *passim*.

13. This fourteenth-century fortress, now submerged by the Bhavani Dam, controlled the important Gajalatti Pass which links southern Mysore with the Coimbatore Plain; Nicholson, 1898, 425-427.

14. Ward erroneously calls the sum a dowry.

15. Later in quarter and one rupee denominations.

16. In the amounts of Rs. ¼, ½, 1, 3, 6, 12, 24 and 48; but see below, p. 172.

17. Also the case in some other districts of Madras Presidency; Buchanan, 1807, vol. II, 247; Grigg, 1880, 286, n. 1.

18. The years 1803-1805 were a period of drought in the Nilgiris; Grigg, 1880, 279, n. 2.

19. There were as yet no Moslem traders.

20. Cloth was not among the trade items. The Coonoor Pass was completed in 1833; Grigg, 1880, 17.

21. Shandy means 'market', from the Tamil *cantai*.

22. Foodstuffs were usually traded by volume rather than weight, for scales were never used in or near the Nilgiris.

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

452 426 Central Bank; and the fourth runs the Marketing Society (Thorner, 1964, 71-73).

426 The law today limits the monthly interest on pawned items to a rate varying from ¾% to 1½%, depending on the size of the loan. Even so, loans between Badagas now command an interest rate of 1% to 4% per month; while the professional money-lenders also secretly charge interest beyond what they are entitled to. On a loan of up to Rs. 200, for example, the Marwari lender can legally charge only 1½% per month simple interest. He gives a receipt for that rate but at the same time insists on one year's interest in advance, and compounded, at 2% per month. One can hardly castigate the Marwari for his cupidity, or the Badaga for still patronizing him, however, when one learns the scale of bribes which some local government officials expect in return for granting loans from the cooperative bank.

452 (426) Yet the cooperative movement has gone a long way towards protecting Badagas from the high interest rates of private money-lenders; the Panchayat Unions and some multi-purpose societies even help farmers by supplying fertilizers, insecticides and modern equipment at cost prices. If these societies operate somewhat more effectively here than in other parts of India, the explanation lies in the fact that the Badaga societies are not in practice multi-caste institutions. They are run largely by and for the members of this one community, thus avoiding some of the factionalism and favouritism that commonly pervade such societies elsewhere.

MODERN SYSTEMS OF MARKETING

178 (366) With the spread of urbanization during the mid-nineteenth century, other markets besides that at Ootacamund began to cater to the needs of local villagers. Regular weekly markets opened at Coonoor, Kotagiri, Wellington, and later in several villages at some distance from any town.[21] The use of these markets by the Badagas is related to two other developments discussed earlier: (651) (654) (434) first, the payment of land revenues and the restriction on use of land caused by the Land Settlement and legislation to stop swidden farming in the forests; and secondly, the consequent movement of some Badaga labourers, including women and children, onto the tea and coffee plantations, where they earned a

requirements were mainly salt, sugar, tobacco and a few trinkets. Cloth might either be obtained at the market or would be brought up into the Nilgiri villages from the Coimbatore Plain by an itinerant Chetti trader (Ward 1821: lxv). The establishment of a bazaar in Ootacamund during the 1820's, and later of others in Coonoor, Wellington, Kotagiri, Ketti and Manjūr, made consumer goods available to the Badagas on a scale and in a variety never before known to them. The desire to acquire some of these new items was presumably one factor in the drive towards greater participation in the cash economy.

Yet the transition took a century to complete. All of the basic requirements for food, goods and services continued to be provided either by the efforts of the Badagas themselves or by their Toda, Kota and Kurumba associates. From the 1820's onwards the Badagas attended the local markets for what they had previously bought in Gundlupet or Kāramaḍai -- salt, sugar, tobacco and trinkets -- but they never sold very much in the markets, and so they rarely had much cash to spend. With the First World War, however, changes in their marketing practices became more apparent. The crucial demand for vegetables to feed the many European troops in India, Burma, Malaya and Ceylon stimulated the change in crops that we have described above (pp. 94-99): Badagas began exporting potatoes and other vegetables to these remote places, and some made handsome profits (Francis 1908: 167).

The cash that came in from this new venture was spent in a great variety of ways. The most obvious was in buying new clothes: in the 1920's men first began to sport European-style shirts and jackets, and in the 1930's women first started to wear colored saris. A few of the more resourceful men invested their incomes in more land or houses, thus laying a stable foundation for future genera-

857 during festive occasions. Badaga women frequently, sometimes daily,
796 wash over sections fronting their houses with coudung solution to keep
535 the courtyards flattened out and cleansed. Low earthen or stone walls
956 edging courtyards define property limits and add to the privacy of
house inhabitants living within house-rows immediately below. Badaga
351 women sometimes store firewood or keep flower gardens on the wall tops,
but they are usually grass covered.

368 Separate shrines and temples stand in communities or on grassy
plots outside. Some Badagas own storage huts where agricultural
implements, fertilizer, seed-potatoes, and agricultural produce are
•366 stored. Small coffee, tea, and supply shops are increasing in number
within Badaga villages. Hot beverages, as well as hotmeats, sweetmeats,
rice, and curry, are served in the coffee and tea shops. From supply
shops are obtained cigarettes, matches, grains, pulses, and vegetables.
Areca nut, betel leaf, lime, and perhaps tobacco, which are combined
and chewed, are also sold. Blacksmiths, building and supply contrac-
tors, carpenters, jewellers, and other entrepreneurs have established
368 businesses in Badaga villages. A single government office, or combin-
ation of offices such as panchayat, police, post, and telegraph offices
may also be present. Church or government schools are now located in
or near many communities.

231 Hamlets and villages still have circular cattle-pens built in
[361] natural depressions or enclosed with stone walls, but cattle-hut con-
struction is slowly leading to abandonment of the pens. Goats and
sheep are kept at night on raised platforms within goat- and sheep-
(654) huts. Monetary inducements offered by the Madras Government have